Please cancel Claims 6-14, 16, 18 and 20, without prejudice, and add new Claims 21-26. The status of the claims is as follows:

1-20. (Canceled)

21. (New) A software execution management device for managing an execution status of software whose execution is restricted by a license, comprising:

a recording medium on which device identification information is fixedly recorded, the device identification information uniquely identifying the software execution management device;

hardware key connection means for reading attach/detach key information from a hardware key when the hardware key is attached, the attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permitted device identification information specifying a permitted device, the hardware key storing the attach/detach key information;

license information storing means storing license information including an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state and a number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously;

identification information determining means for determining whether the permitted device identification information included in the hardware key

connected to the hardware key connection means and the device identification information are same, when receiving an execution permission determination request from a computer connected via a network;

executing computer quantity determining means for monitoring a number of executing computers executing the software, and when receiving the execution permission determination request, determining whether the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers;

software key decrypting means for decrypting the software decryption key included in the license information with the attach/detach key-specific encryption key read from the hardware key when the identification information determining means determines sameness and the executing computing quantity determining means determines that the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers; and

decryption key managing means for giving the software decryption key decrypted by the software key decrypting means to the computer issuing the execution permission determination request.

22.   (New)   A software execution management device for managing an execution status of software whose execution is restricted by a license, comprising:

a recording medium on which first device identification information is fixedly recorded, the first device identification information uniquely identifying the software execution management device;

hardware key connection means for reading attach/detach key information from a hardware key when the hardware key is attached, the attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permitted device identification information specifying a permitted device, the hardware key storing the attach/detach key information;

license information storing means storing license information including at least one piece of chassis identification information, an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state, and a number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously, the chassis identification information specifying a chassis on which a plurality of computers can be mounted and that is permitted to execute the software with a computer mounted thereon;

first identification information determining means for determining whether the permitted device identification information included in the hardware key connected to the hardware key connection means and the first device identification information are same when receiving, from a computer connected via a network, an execution permission determination request including second device identification information fixedly recorded in a chassis on which the computer is mounted;

second identification information determining means for determining whether the second device identification information included in the execution

4

permission determination request matches anyone piece of chassis identification information included in the license information when receiving the execution permission determination request;

executing computer quantity determining means for monitoring a number of executing computers executing the software, and when receiving the execution permission determination request, determining whether the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers;

software key decrypting means for decrypting the software decryption key included in the license information with the attach/detach key-specific encryption key read from the hardware key when the first identification information determining means determines sameness, the second identification information determining means determines that the second device identification information matches the one piece of chassis identification information, and the executing computer quantity determining means determines that the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers; and

decryption key managing means for giving the software decryption key decrypted by the software key decrypting means to the computer issuing the execution permission determination request.

23. (New) A software execution management method for a software execution management device managing an execution status of software whose execution is restricted by a license, wherein:

5

hardware key connection means reads attach/detach key information from a hardware key when the hardware key is attached, the attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permitted device identification information specifying a permitted device, the hardware key storing the attach/detach key information;

identification information determining means is provided with a recording medium on which device identification information is fixedly recorded, and determines whether the permitted device identification information included in the hardware key connected to the hardware key connection means and the device identification information are same when receiving an execution permission determination request from a computer connected via a network, the device identification information uniquely identifying the software execution management device;

executing computer quantity determining means is provided with license information storing means storing license information including an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state and a number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously, and monitors a number of executing computers executing the software, and when receiving the execution permission determination request, determines whether the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers;

software key decrypting means decrypts the software decryption key included in the license information with the attach/detach key-specific encryption key

6

read from the hardware key when the identification information determining means determines sameness and the executing computing quantity determining means determines that the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers; and

decryption key managing means gives the software decryption key decrypted by the software key decrypting means to the computer issuing the execution permission determination request.

24.	(New)	A software execution management method for a software execution management device managing an execution status of software whose execution is restricted by a license, wherein:

hardware key connection means reads attach/detach key information from a hardware key when the hardware key is attached, the attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permitted device identification information specifying a permitted device, the hardware key storing the attach/detach key information;

first identification information determining means is provided with a recording medium on which first device identification information is fixedly recorded, and determines whether the permitted device identification information included in the hardware key connected to the hardware key connection means and the first device identification information are same when receiving, from a computer connected via a network, an execution permission determination request including second device identification information fixedly recorded in a chassis on which the computer is

mounted, the first device identification information uniquely identifying the software execution management device;

second identification information determining means is provided with license information storing means storing license information including at least one piece of chassis identification information, an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state, and a number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously, and determines whether the second device identification information included in the execution permission determination request matches anyone piece of chassis identification information included in the license information when receiving the execution permission determination request, the chassis identification information specifying a chassis on which a plurality of computers can be mounted and that is permitted to execute the software with a computer mounted thereon;

executing computer quantity determining means monitors a number of executing computers executing the software, and when receiving the execution permission determination request, determines whether the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers;

software key decrypting means decrypts the software decryption key included in the license information with the attach/detach key-specific encryption key read from the hardware key when the first identification information determining means determines sameness, the second identification information determining means determines that the second device identification information matches the one piece of

chassis identification information, and the executing computing quantity determining means determines that the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers; and

decryption key managing means gives the software decryption key decrypted by the software key decrypting means to the computer issuing the execution permission determination request.

25.   (New)   A computer-readable recording medium storing a software execution management program for managing an execution status of software whose execution is restricted by a license, the software execution management program causing a computer provided with a recording medium having fixedly recorded thereon device identification information uniquely identifying the computer to operate as:

a hardware key connection unit for reading attach/detach key information from a hardware key when the hardware key is attached, the attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permitted device identification information specifying a permitted device, the hardware key storing the attach/detach key information;

a license information storing unit storing license information including an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state and a number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously;

an identification information determining unit for determining whether the permitted device identification information included in the hardware key connected to the hardware key connection unit and the device identification information are same when receiving an execution permission determination request from an execution target computer connected via a network;

an executing computer quantity determining unit for monitoring a number of executing computers executing the software, and when receiving the execution permission determination request, determining whether the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers;

a software key decrypting unit for decrypting the software decryption key included in the license information with the attach/detach key-specific encryption key read from the hardware key when the identification information determining unit determines sameness and the executing computing quantity determining unit determines that the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers; and

a decryption key managing unit for giving the software decryption key decrypted by the software key decrypting unit to the execution target computer issuing the execution permission determination request.

26. (New)   A computer-readable recording medium storing a software execution management program for managing an execution status of software whose execution is restricted by a license, the software execution

10

management program causing a computer provided with a recording medium having fixedly recorded thereon first device identification information uniquely identifying the computer to operate as:

a hardware key connection unit for reading attach/detach key information from a hardware key when the hardware key is attached, the attach/detach key information including an attach/detach key-specific encryption key and permitted device identification information specifying a permitted device, the hardware key storing the attach/detach key information;

a license information storing unit storing license information including at least one piece of chassis identification information, an encrypted software decryption key for decrypting the software provided in an encrypted state, and a number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously, the chassis identification information specifying a chassis on which a plurality of execution target computers can be mounted and that is permitted to execute the software with an execution target computer mounted thereon;

a first identification information determining unit for determining whether the permitted target device identification information included in the hardware key connected to the hardware key connection unit and the first device identification information are same when receiving, from an execution target computer connected via a network, an execution permission determination request including second device identification information fixedly recorded in a chassis on which the execution target computer is mounted;

11

a second identification information determining unit for determining whether the second device identification information included in the execution permission determination request matches anyone piece of chassis identification information included in the license information when receiving the execution permission determination request;

an executing computer quantity determining unit for monitoring a number of executing computers executing the software, and when receiving the execution permission determination request, determining whether the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers;

a software key decrypting unit for decrypting the software decryption key included in the license information with the attach/detach key-specific encryption key read from the hardware key when the first identification information determining unit determines sameness, the second identification information determining unit determines that the second device identification information matches the one piece of chassis identification information, and the executing computing quantity determining unit determines that the number of computers that can execute the software simultaneously is greater than the number of executing computers; and

a decryption key managing unit for giving the software decryption key decrypted by the software key decrypting unit to the execution target computer issuing the execution permission determination request.